

Utah Prairie Dog Recovery and Habitat Conservation Act
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WHEREAS, the Utah Prairie Dog (*Cynomys Parvidens*) is a listed species under the Endangered Species Act; and

WHEREAS, federal recovery efforts have occurred for approximately 40 years; and

WHEREAS, the most successful recovery efforts have occurred when local government partners with local federal land managers; and

WHEREAS, the Utah Prairie Dog's range is limited to the West Desert recovery unit located primarily in Iron County, Utah and the Paunsaugunt recovery unit located primarily in Garfield County, Utah and the Awapa recovery unit located primarily in Wayne County, Utah; and

WHEREAS, the Utah Prairie Dog is susceptible to and a carrier of bubonic plague; and

WHEREAS, the Utah Prairie Dog has migrated from protected federal lands to unprotected private lands; and

WHEREAS, the Utah Prairie Dog has negatively impacted the health, welfare and economic vitality of the private lands it now occupies; and

WHEREAS, the Utah Prairie Dog has caused significant damage to public and private properties including golf courses, airports, cemeteries, residences, agricultural lands, industrial lands, and crops; and

WHEREAS, the counties where the recovery units are located contain as much as 93% federal land; and

WHEREAS, the counties where the recovery units are located contain as little as 4% private lands; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable that Utah Prairie Dog recovery efforts concentrate on protected federal lands; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable to clear unprotected private lands from Utah Prairie Dog impacts,

Therefore, the United States Congress establishes the Utah Prairie Dog Recovery and Habitat Conservation as follows:

1. There is established the Utah Prairie Dog Recovery and Habitat Conservation Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shall consult, work in cooperation and be consistent with the local plans, programs and policies of Iron, Garfield and Wayne Counties in carrying out the purposes of this Act.

2. National Park Service units, Bureau of Land Management Field Offices, and U.S. Forest Service Ranger Districts shall partner and work in cooperation with Iron County, Garfield County and Wayne County to remove Utah Prairie Dogs from private lands in the West Desert, Paunsagaunt and Awapa recovery units and reestablish Utah Prairie Dog populations on federally protected lands within their jurisdictions.

3. Recovery efforts include trapping, transporting, trans-locating, transplanting, taking, protecting from plague, counting, mapping, habitat enhancement, habitat development, and other efforts to establish viable populations on federally protected lands in each of the recovery units.

4. For carrying out the purposes of this act there is allocated from the FY 2014 federal budget the following funds:

- A. To Iron County \$600,000;
- B. To Garfield County \$500,000;
- C. To Wayne County \$400,000.

5. At least 15% of the funding shall be spent on identifying, developing, enhancing, and conserving habitat on protected federal land in the respective recovery units.

6. Beginning October 1, 2018 Utah Prairie Dogs located on unprotected private lands in the West Desert, Paunsagaunt and Awapa recovery units shall no longer receive federal protection under the Endangered Species Act or other federal law.

7. Beginning October 1, 2018 Utah Prairie Dogs located on unprotected State lands in the West Desert, Paunsagaunt and Awapa recovery units shall no longer receive federal protection under the Endangered Species Act or other federal law.

8. Prior to October 1st, 2018 each of the impacted Counties may identify up to 6400 acres of BLM land to be acquired under the Recreation and Public Purpose Act to be used as locally protected Utah Prairie Dog conservation areas.

9. Prior to October 1, 2018 the State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) may identify up to 6400 acres of Forest Service or BLM land to trade for lands under State ownership that have been identified as mapped or occupied Utah Prairie Dog habitat. Federal agencies shall trade lands on an acre per acre or equal value basis as determined by SITLA.

- a. Lands designated as wilderness or wilderness study areas under the Wilderness Act of 1964 shall not be eligible for selection in paragraphs 7 or 8.
- b. Lands containing federal campgrounds and infrastructure shall not be eligible for selection in paragraphs 7 or 8.
- c. Lands shall be identified / traded within the same County/recovery unit.